

CLAIMS

1. A pre-closed absorbent article for fitting about a wearer's body to contain excreta and/or bodily exudates, comprising:

a containment assembly having a front waist region, a back waist region opposed to the front waist region, a crotch region disposed between the front waist region and the back waist region, a front end edge, a back end edge, side edges comprising portions defining leg openings when the absorbent article is closed, leg opening margins, a longitudinal centerline, a lateral centerline, a topsheet, a backsheet, and an absorbent core disposed at least partially between the topsheet and the backsheet,

at least one of the leg opening margins having an elastic extensibility of at least about 60 percent when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by a 5 kg lateral spreading force applied at an uppermost distal point of each of the leg opening margins.

2. The absorbent article of claim 1 further comprising at least one outer leg cuff having an elastic extensibility of at least about 60 percent when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by the 5 kg lateral spreading force.

3. The absorbent article of claim 2 wherein at least a portion of the outer leg cuff is curved.

4. The absorbent article of claim 3 wherein the outer leg cuff is wrapped over at least one of the portions of one of the side edges defining one of the leg openings.

5. The absorbent article of claim 4 wherein the outer leg cuff is discrete.

6. The absorbent article of claim 5 wherein the outer leg cuff has first and second ends joined to encircle at least one of the leg openings.

7. The absorbent article of claim 2 wherein the outer leg cuff comprises a laminate.

8. The absorbent article of claim 2 wherein the outer leg cuff is differentially elastically extensible.

9. The absorbent article of claim 8 wherein the outer leg cuff comprises at least a first portion having an elastic extensibility of at least about 100 percent.

10. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein the leg opening margin is differentially elastically extensible.

11. The absorbent article of claim 10 wherein the leg opening margin comprises at least three portions having differential elastic extensibility.

12. The absorbent article of claim 11 wherein at least one of the three portions of the leg opening margin has an elastic extensibility of at least about 100 percent.

13. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein at least one of the leg openings has an orientation angle of about 30 degrees or less when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by the 5 kg lateral spreading force.

14. The absorbent article of claim 1 having a crotch region flat lateral width equal to or less than about 30% of an overall flat lateral width of the absorbent article when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by the 5 kg lateral spreading force.

15. A pre-closed absorbent article for fitting about a wearer's body to contain excreta and/or bodily exudates, comprising:

a) a containment assembly having a front waist region, a back waist region opposed to the front waist region, a crotch region disposed between the front waist region and the back waist region, a front end edge, a back end edge, side edges comprising portions defining leg openings when the absorbent article is closed, leg opening margins, a longitudinal centerline, a lateral centerline, a topsheet, a backsheet, and an absorbent core disposed at least partially between the topsheet and the backsheet, at least one of the leg opening margins having an elastic extensibility of at least about 60 percent when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by a 5 kg lateral spreading force applied at an uppermost distal point of each of the leg opening margins; and

b) at least one curved discrete outer leg cuff having an elastic extensibility of at least about 60 percent when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by the 5 kg lateral spreading force, the outer leg cuff being wrapped over at least one of the portions of one of the side edges defining one of the leg openings, the outer leg cuff comprising first and second ends joined to encircle at least one of the leg openings.

16. An absorbent article for fitting about a wearer's body to contain excreta and/or bodily exudates, comprising:

a containment assembly having a front waist region, a back waist region opposed to the front waist region, a crotch region disposed between the front waist region and the back waist region, a front end edge, a back end edge, side edges comprising portions defining leg openings when the absorbent article is closed, leg opening margins, a fastening system, a longitudinal centerline, a lateral centerline, a topsheet, a backsheet, and an absorbent core disposed at least partially between the topsheet and the backsheet,

at least one of the leg opening margins having an elastic extensibility of at least about 60 percent when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by a 5 kg lateral spreading force applied at an uppermost distal point of each of the leg opening margins.

17. The absorbent article of claim 16 wherein the leg opening margin is differentially elastically extensible.

18. The absorbent article of claim 17 wherein the leg opening margin comprises at least three portions having differential elastic extensibility.

19. The absorbent article of claim 16 wherein at least one of the leg openings has an orientation angle of about 30 degrees or less when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by the 5 kg lateral spreading force.

20. The absorbent article of claim 16 having a crotch region flat lateral width equal to or less than about 30% of an overall flat lateral width of the absorbent article when the absorbent article is elastically extended laterally by the 5 kg lateral spreading force.